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Contact: Maria Reppas, (202) 225-6631 / (202) 527-0149 maria.reppas@mail.house.gov

Organization Acknowledges McCollum's Work on Health Care Reform, Medicare Geographic Disparity Issue



Washington, DC - The Minnesota Hospital Association (MHA) has honored Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) with its 2010 Public Achievement Award. In a ceremony with MHA leaders and members, Congresswoman McCollum was recognized for her work in the 111th Congress shaping health care reform legislation - specifically her efforts to correct the Medicare geographic disparity for Minnesota hospitals, doctors, and patients.

Congresswoman McCollum called receiving the MHA's Public Achievement Award "...a tremendous honor from an organization that is influential and vital to high quality health care in Minnesota. I am grateful to receive such prestigious recognition for my work on behalf of Minnesota." She added, "For far too long, Minnesota was being unfairly treated by Medicare for delivering high-quality medical care at a low cost. Thanks to the hard work and support from the Minnesota Hospital Association, Congress will ensure that Minnesota hospitals, doctors, and patients are no longer disadvantaged by Medicare."

For decades, hospitals in Minnesota have been inadequately reimbursed by the Medicare system. Although Minnesota doctors were giving high-quality care to patients, hospitals were only being reimbursed for quantity, putting the entire state at a disadvantage in comparison to other states. The more patients a hospital could serve, the more Medicare would reimburse without taking quality of care into consideration.

"Thanks to Congresswoman McCollum's perseverance and fortitude, the new federal health care reform law will begin addressing the long-standing Medicare payment inequity that for many years penalized Minnesota providers that deliver higher-quality and lower-cost health care," said Lawrence Massa, MHA president and CEO. "Minnesota hospitals are fortunate to have her leadership and representation in Washington."

A founding member of the Congressional Quality Care Coalition, Congresswoman McCollum will continue her work to transform the health care system to reward value in care and make evidence-based, quality care the standard regardless of location in the United States. During the health care debate, the Coalition was able to secure an agreement with the White House to address Medicare geographic disparity as part of health care reform.

Every year, the Minnesota Hospital Association 2010 Public Achievement Award recognizes a public official in an elected or appointed position or a private citizen who has performed extraordinary service in the health care policy arena.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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